

**Governor's Upper Yellowstone River Task Force**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**October 16, 2001**  
**Yellowstone Inn**  
**Meeting began at 7:00 p.m.**

**I. Introduction**

**Members Present:**

John Bailey, Chair	Jerry O'Hair
Roy Aserlind	Brant Oswald
Andy Dana	Ellen Woodbury
Dave Haug, Vice Chair	

**Others Present:**

Tom Olliff, YNP Ex-Officio	Rodney Schwartz	Lionel Dicharry
Laurence Siroky, DNRC Ex-Officio	Scott Bosse	Michael Gilbert
Allan Steinle, Corps Ex-Officio	Chuck Dalby	Pete Story
Joel Tohtz, FWP Ex-Officio	Karl Biastoch	Duncan Patten
Liz Galli-Noble, Coordinator	Myla McGowan	Peter Ismert
Amy Miller, Administrative Secretary	Jeanne-Marie Souvigney	Mike Merigiano

**II. Prior Meeting Minutes**

The September 27, 2001 minutes were approved as written.

**III. Financial Updates**

**1. Grant Spending Report:**

Amy Miller reported the following to the Task Force:

<b>EXPENDED GRANTS</b>			
<b>Grant Name</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Study Component</b>
DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant	6-30-99	2,100.00	Physical Features Inventory
DNRC HB223 Grant	7-30-99	10,000.00	Aerial Photography
DNRC Riparian/Wetlands Educational Grant	6-30-00	960.99	Hydrologic Response to the 1988 Fires
DEQ Grant (319 1 <sup>st</sup> )	9-30-00	40,000.00	Coordinator Position
DNRC Watershed Planning Assistance Grant	1-31-01	10,000.00	Watershed Land Use Study
DEQ Start-Up Grant	6-26-01	49,138.00	Coordinator position, Administrative Secretary, additional cross-sections, and operating expenses.
DNRC HB223	10/1/01	6,500.00	Riparian Trend Analysis
<b>CURRENT GRANTS</b>			
<b>Grant Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Spent</b>	<b>Remaining Balance</b>
DNRC RDGP Grant (expires December 31, 2002)	299,940.00	226,988.57	72,951.43
DEQ 319 Grant (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) (expires August 31, 2002)	58,000.00	23,011.45	34,988.55
DEQ 319 Grant (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) (expires June 20, 2003)	44,000.00	0	44,000.00
BLM Funding (Wildlife Study)	10,000	9,202.80	797.20

**2. Public v. Private Funding**

John Bailey began the discussion on private versus public funding sources by reminding the Task Force that they had addressed this issue long ago. He read aloud from the October 22, 1998 Task Force meeting minutes and cited the Task Force decision not to accept private funds from Trout Unlimited. John Bailey then asked the Task Force members if they wanted to change that policy or not. The following comments were given:

- Private funds can be construed as persuasion. (Jerry O’Hair)
- There is no problem using private funding. Good science, if properly executed, won’t be biased, no matter what the funding source. (Roy Aserlind)
- To pay for a research study component with private funding source might create problems, the study maybe perceived as biased. (Ellen Woodbury)
- Private funding might be okay for operating expenses. Foundations have hidden agendas and needs, and built in hidden bias. There may be an appearance of a problem. (Andy Dana)
- We should keep using public funding. (Jerry O’Hair)
- The Task Force should decide on whether or not to accept private funding on a case-by-case basis, because not all of the study components are fully funded at this time, such as mine (Geomorphology). (Chuck Dalby)
- If we could control the private funding source, than maybe it would be acceptable. (Ellen Woodbury)
- It is not everyday that people want to give you money. (Tom Olliff)

**Roy Aserlind moved to “have the Task Force consider utilization of private funds on a case-by-case basis.” David Haug seconded the motion. The motion did not pass.**

**The final vote was as follows:**

**Joel Tohtz – Yes**

**Brant Oswald – Yes**

**Jerry O’Hair – No**

**Ellen Woodbury – No**

**Tom Olliff – Yes**

**Allan Steinle – Yes**

**David Haug – Yes**

**Andy Dana – No, but maybe down the road**

**Laurence Siroky – Yes**

There was then further discussion on whether or not a consensus vote was necessary, because the private funding issue may be a “business or monetary” decision, which only requires majority approval. However, Task Force members agreed that this was in fact a “policy” decision, which requires consensus approval. So in the end, the motion failed. Although the Task Force members voted down the motion, several members clearly stated that there may be a need to bring the private funding issue back before the Task Force in the future (for example for operational needs).

**Background:** The private funding issue was addressed at this Task Force meeting because the Yellowstone Spring Creeks Foundation approached the Task Force with the hope to spend up to \$25,000 on a collaborative Yellowstone River research investigation (*Attachment A*). In addition, John Bailey also reported that a Task Force member had inquired about a potential private source that may be willing to help fund the entire final phase of the project (\$250,000).

#### **IV. Mapping Projects Presentations**

Mike Gilbert was asked to report on two recently completed mapping projects: (1) National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Riparian, Wetland, and Land Use mapping, and (2) Floodplain Contour map.

##### **NWI Mapping**

Digital maps of riparian, wetland, and land use themes were completed for the study corridor. Mapping was based on photo-interpretation of August 1999 1:24,000 color infrared aerial photography. The corridor consists of portions of 14 USGS 7.5 minute quadrangles covering the Yellowstone River Valley from the northern boundary of Yellowstone National Park to the Springdale Bridge. The lateral boundary begins for both sides of the Yellowstone River at the 5400-foot contour and ends at the 4300-foot contour. Objectives of this inventory were to document baseline conditions and serve as supporting data for other environmental investigations. Work was performed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory. Funding was provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and US Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District. A final report dated July 2001 was distributed. This data is available for downloading via the NWI Center in St. Petersburg, Florida [www.nwi.fws.gov](http://www.nwi.fws.gov).

### **Floodplain Contour Map**

Elevational data for the Emigrant to Carter's Bridge study reach was provided to project researchers in September 2001. Data are to be used in support of study floodplain mapping, hydraulic modeling, fisheries, geomorphology, and cottonwood recruitment studies. The remainder of the contour data is scheduled to be available at the end of October 2001. The Corps will be reviewing the data for acceptance with distribution to project researchers in mid- November 2001.

## **V. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Business**

Duncan Patten (TAC Chair) reported on the TAC meeting, which had been held earlier on October 16.

***Watershed Land Use Assessment***—One of the TAC agenda items was a review of the Watershed Land Use Assessment product to date; the Task Force had requested this review at their September 27, 2001 meeting. Duncan summarized that the NRCS attempted to complete a two-time-period comparison (1985 and 1999) of land use in the Upper Yellowstone River Watershed, but were unable to produce an acceptable 1985 map product. This was due to problems associated with the 1985 satellite imagery (specifically: cloud cover, sensor difficulties, artifacts, etc.). The NRCS is offering to complete the 1999 watershed land use map, but cannot deliver a 1985 map product. They will also produce a final report for the Task Force.

The full TAC discussed the issue and their recommendation is to have the NRCS complete the 1999 map, but not to complete the 1985 map. The baseline for 1999 is good and accurate. The 1985 map product and the change model are not worth the effort or the added expense. To complete the change model, the NRCS would need to charge the Task Force approximately \$75,000. There is very little change detected at the watershed scale. The NRCS is nearly complete with the 1999 map; they are waiting for soil data information, which is due by the end of this year.

The Task Force accepted the TAC recommendation unanimously. Although Jerry O'Hair agreed, he said that he "does have reservations on where this is going."

Tom Olliff mentioned that the *National Science Foundation on the Northern Range* study is almost complete. A copy of the published book will be made available to the Task Force (possibly by November 2001).

***Wildlife Literature Review***—Another item that was discussed at the TAC meeting was the Wildlife Literature Review. Duncan Patten reported that the TAC is recommending that an errata sheet be added to all printed copies of the USGS-BRD Open File Report #01-58, *Toward Assessing the Effects of Bank Stabilization Activities on Wildlife Communities of the Upper Yellowstone River, U.S.A.*

The errata sheet would clearly state that the publication is not endorsed nor supported in any way by the Task Force or their TAC, and any mention of these groups in the text should be considered to be expunged. The USGS-BRD stated (through Rob Hazlewood) that they were disinclined to make edits to the publication; edits that the TAC felt were necessary. In addition, the USGS-BRD has stated that no further copies of this publication will be re-printed or released. The Task Force is in full support of this TAC recommendation; therefore, John Bailey asked Liz Galli-Noble to write a letter to USGS-BRD stating the position of the Task Force.

***TAC Publication Protocol***—Duncan Patten reported that the TAC discussed and approved the TAC Protocol as was written.

**Brant Oswald moved to "accept the TAC Protocol." Dave Haug seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **VI. Socio-Economic Assessment Update**

Dave Haug (Socio-Economic Subcommittee Chair) reported on the progress of the Socio-Economic Assessment. The US Army Corps of Engineers signed a contract with BBC as of October 1, 2001. The contract requires that two public meetings (baseline information gathering) and two formal meetings with the Task Force be held by

BBC. Dave encouraged the Task Force to schedule the first public meeting in January 2002. He then asked the other members for input, and a short discussion followed. Many agreed that two distinct times of the year would be best, which would give the public two opportunities to attend. It was suggested to hold the first meeting in December, January, or February and the second meeting in September. The intent of the meetings would be to gather baseline social and economic data.

Rodney Schwartz (Corps, Omaha) mentioned that five management alternatives would be introduced at the public meetings. Rodney explained that this would generate discussion about the Corps permitting process. However, Ellen Woodbury explained that the Task Force is not doing a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process in Phase I, and that management alternatives will not be discussed in the Phase I public meetings. Phase I of the Socio-Economic Assessment is different from the NEPA process; the NEPA or scoping process comes in Phase II of the study. The Task Force will not combine the meetings; this would not be appropriate because the Task Force is not a federal body and cannot do NEPA. The public is not ready for the presentation of five alternatives. Andy Dana added that Phase I of the socio-economic study needs to be divorced from the SAMP/EIS/NEPA process. The understanding of the subcommittee has always been that the Corps will be addressing NEPA in Phase II. Liz Galli-Noble reiterated that the subcommittee endorses the socio-economic study contract as it is written, which includes only one alternative—the no action alternative. The subcommittee has stated on several previous occasions that management alternatives and scoping will not be included in the Phase I portion of this study.

John Bailey explained to the subcommittee and Rodney Schwartz that BBC needs to come and meet the Task Force as soon as possible. They need to make a presentation to the Task Force before any of the public meetings are scheduled. The Task Force needs to understand what BBC is going to do overall, and at these public meetings.

## **VII. Outreach and Education Activities Updates**

Liz reported that she has accomplished the following outreach activities since the September Task Force meeting:

YRCDC RAC meeting, October 3, Billings  
Cascade County Conservation Council presentation, October 11, Great Falls

## **VIII. Task Force Coordinator Evaluation**

John Bailey reported that the Evaluation Subcommittee (John Bailey, Ellen Woodbury, Dave Haug, and Terri Marceron) has not had the opportunity to meet. The subcommittee will meet to complete the evaluation and will report back to the Task Force at the next meeting.

## **IX. 2001 Annual Report**

Liz Galli-Noble presented information regarding the *2001 Annual Report (Attachment B)*. She mentioned that more photographs and maps would be added to this year's annual report. The timeline and costs are similar to last year's report. Liz reported that 900 copies of the *2000 Annual Report* had been printed with 200 copies still remaining. Therefore, the Task Force may want to print 100 to 200 less copies this year. In addition, Liz asked for editing assistance from Task Force members and several volunteered to help.

## **X. Schedule Next Task Force Meeting**

Liz Galli-Noble requests that Task Force members call her at #222-3701, if they will be unable to attend scheduled meetings.

The next Task Force meetings are scheduled for:

Tuesday, November 13, 2001 at the Yellowstone Inn.  
Thursday, December 13, 2001 at the Yellowstone Inn.

**XI. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.**

**Appendix A. Yellowstone Spring Creek Foundation  
September 14, 2001**

**Available Funding:** \$25,000 from the Yellowstone Spring Creek Foundation

**Type of Project:** Projects should center on research that is related to the Yellowstone River and its relation to the spring creeks. The project must focus on, and provide benefit to, the spring creeks area on the upper Yellowstone River. The project should be a cooperative and collaborative effort, building on or adding to Task Force studies already underway.

Note: The Foundation does not require project “endorsement” from the Task Force; however, they request your guidance in selecting an appropriate research effort that would benefit both entities. The timing seems ideal to build on the broad research efforts of the Task Force by applying additional research funding where needed.

**Project Management / Contracting:**

All project management and contracting will be done by the Foundation, which is a 501 (c)3 non-profit.

**Possible Research Projects:**

- (1) Geomorphology Study—Mapping of Historic Channel Changes  
Chuck Dalby (DNRC)
- (2) Juvenile and Adult Fish Production from Spring Creeks  
and Use of Livingston Ditch
- (3) Socio-Economic Assessment—focus on the social and economic  
contribution of the spring creeks, recreation, and fishing in the Upper Yellowstone River Watershed.

## Appendix B. 2001 ANNUAL REPORT

### Proposed Time line:

---

October 16, 2001 Task Force Meeting	Annual Report outline presented
Prior to November 13, 2001 Task Force Meeting	1 <sup>st</sup> draft of Annual Report mailed to Task Force
November 13, 2001 Task Force Meeting	1 <sup>st</sup> Draft of Annual Report discussed by Task Force and revisions made by Liz
Prior to December 13, 2001 Task Force Meeting	2 <sup>nd</sup> Draft of Annual Report mailed to Task Force
December 13, 2001 Task Force Meeting	2 <sup>nd</sup> Draft of Annual Report reviewed by Task Force and final revisions made by Liz
December 24 - 29, 2001	Final Draft of Annual Report goes to printers
January 7 - 11, 2001	Final Draft of Annual Report mailed to Governor

---

### Annual Report Layout:

Do we want this years report to look much the same as 1999 and 2000?

Will add a more detailed description of SAMP language and process.

Need to provide more detail in the *Research Component Status Report*, including products.

More photos, more maps, etc.

Other suggestions?

### Budget:

See 2000 *Cost Estimates* handout; ordered 900 copies; total cost \$1,998.90.

We still have approximately 200 copies remaining; might want to order 800 this year.

If we make the Annual Report available on a website, we could print fewer copies.

### Editing Assistance:

Who is willing to provide editing assistance to Liz during this process?